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Title: Listen: Oppenheimer's office chair One of the only possessions the Lab has from our first Director

Author(s): Steeves, Brye Ann

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### **Listen: Oppenheimer's office chair**

#### **One of the only possessions the Lab has from our first Director**

Even the father of the atomic bomb had to sit down somewhere.

It's hard to believe that our legendary first Lab director and brilliant physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer did something as ordinary as using a chair at work like the rest of us do.

However, aside from a recently gifted book, this chair from the 1940s is the only Oppenheimer possession that the Lab has. And Oppie fans love it. The chair is routinely loaned to museums nationwide for display.

As it turns out, though, the fascination may be more about the man who sat in the chair than the chair itself.

Listen to **Alan Carr**, the senior historian at the Lab's National Security Research Center (NSRC), and **Wendy Strohmeyer**, the artifacts collection specialist for the Lab's Bradbury Science Museum, in Episode 1 of the Relics podcast series.

#### **Inside the episode**

The Lab's story starts three and a half years into World War II, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Army Gen. Leslie Groves was in charge of the Manhattan Project, which included a secret lab in Los Alamos called Project Y. Its purpose: To create the world's first nuclear weapons.

Oppenheimer and his team did just that. In only 27 months, the Lab accomplished one of the greatest scientific achievements of all time and helped end WWII weeks later.

Perhaps Oppenheimer had his moments of scientific breakthrough while seated in his office. Or, maybe not.



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caption:

This photo was taken of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the Lab's first director, when he visited the Lab in 1964. He is sitting in his office chair from 1943. The chair is now an accessioned artifact of the Lab's Bradbury Science Museum and is regularly loaned to other organizations for display.



